

# American Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Association Newsletter

Paonia, Colorado

April 2005

## New Registration Form for 2005 Lambs

We've updated the registration application for all lambs. The new form is available on-line as an Excel spreadsheet or copies can be mailed to you if you do not have internet access. This new form has space for all the required and optional data we can enter on your lambs. Please note that the required info to register a lamb includes full data on the farm tag, type of birth, full birth date (day, month and year) and the registration number and name for both sire and dam.

To TRANSFER a registered sheep we will require the full federal tag data to be entered as well.

Please enter in **\*all\*** lambs born or even stillborn so that population data may be kept and indicate those lambs that are to be birth notified only (ones you plan to cull for meat) and those you plan to register.

Fees for registration will be determined by the Board as soon as the elections are completed.

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### Some Thoughts on Horn Shape

By Oogie McGuire

One of the interesting things I learned at the General meeting was the difference between the US line and UK line rams horn shape and style.

I had identified 2 main styles of horn shape in my flock but the UK style adds a third variety. There is a limited market for horns, horn caps and skulls so it pays to know what you are likely to get when you breed your sheep.

The two original shapes are what I termed wide spread and heavy massive. Horn shape appears to be fairly heritable and daughters of wide spread rams produce wide spread horn rams lambs so it's not a sex linked trait.

In the pictures I show all three types of horns and some of the crosses.



In the picture of the skulls the top two heads show the wide spread horn type. The animal on the left was Mondello's Harley (SGF Barry John x Wye Heights Charity) The animal on the right was Mondello's Mordeyrn (SGF Barry John x Wye Heights Amy). Their horns are the widest spreads of any of my rams.

Second row on the left is a cross between a UK animal and a massive horned animal. This was Fed 155 (Desert Weyr Cynfab x Wye Heights Hope) The right is a straight US line in the massive horn style Desert Weyr Merfyn (High Desert Jet x Cherith Myfina). Massive horn types are thicker, more ridged and much closer to the head. All the rams that I have had problems with on the horns growing improperly were massive horned type rams.

Third row is another massive horn type on the left Desert Weyr Rocket J Sheep (High Desert Jet x Mondello's Izold) and a UK crossed on massive type on the right Fed 153 (Desert Weyr Cynfab x Wye Heights Hope)

The bottom row are all UK line crossed onto massive horn types. They are from left to right Fed 231 (Desert Weyr Cynfab x Wye Heights Agnes) , Fed 207 (Desert Weyr Cynfab x Mondello's Lluan) and Fed 18 (Desert Weyr Cynfab x Mondello's Lluan).



The ram shown is Double J Lionel, a UK sired ram that shows the smooth tight curl of the UK rams.

One advantage we have in the US is that we have preserved some of the older massive horn types

that are no longer as common in the UK. Horn shape is very subjective to each individual breeder. Wide spread racks might be suitable for people targeting the "shooter ram" market on the exotic hunting ranches in the desert southwest. I have seen ads for hunts where the animal shot was clearly a Black Welsh sheep, probably crossbred. The wide spread type is also ideal for the making of a shofar, and can be important to Jewish customers.

The massive horn set seems desirable to people making drinking horns, buttons and other crafts. Massive horns can also be made into a shofar, but the sound is not as clear as from a wide spread animal.

The UK style is not yet as popular with my horn market. Mr. Workman did point out that the smoother tighter horn is common in the making of the head for a traditional shepherds crook. Perhaps if we had any makers of crooks I'd find a nice market for them as well.

My limited experience seems to show that horn style and set is moderately heritable, and that combining styles by crossing gives you an intermediate horn set.

I now track the sires of all my ewes by horn type to avoid frequent massive to massive breeding which seems to result in more horn problems in the rams. I do not have enough experience yet with the UK type on wide spread, as most of the wide spread daughters are only now being bred to UK line rams. UK on massive gives a much lighter and smaller horn set.

I'd be interested in seeing pictures of other people's rams to compare horn style and set in the entire population.

## Board Election Procedure

IF you are a current (paid) voting member of ABWMSA for 2005, enclosed with this newsletter is a ballot and two envelopes.

Please complete your ballot and place it in the smaller envelope marked "ballot." Take the sealed smaller envelope and place it in the larger envelope (addressed to the ABWMSA box).

Only people who have sent in dues for 2005 will have their ballots count for this election.

If you do **not** have a ballot enclosed and did not renew but you still wish to remain a voting member, you must call or e-mail immediately. Oogie's phone number in Colorado is (970) 527-3573 and email is: [oogiem@desertweyr.com](mailto:oogiem@desertweyr.com).

She will send a ballot to you and will verify it once she receives your membership dues.

As ballots come in, Oogie will be checking the larger envelopes to verify that you have paid your dues for 2005. She will take the smaller unmarked envelopes out and save them for final counting to ensure that your votes will be anonymous.

After voting has closed, she will take the unopened ballots to the local notary where they will be officially opened, counted, witnessed and notarized.

The election results will be included with the next newsletter.

**Ballots will be counted  
on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April.**

The following individuals have been nominated for either officer or board positions within the ABWMSA:

**Pres.** - Tom Wyman  
**VP** - S. Stevens Sands  
(appointed to fill vacancy  
-willing to continue)  
**Sec./Treas.** - Oogie McGuire  
(willing to continue)

### Board of Directors

(Four candidates choose THREE)

Sue Goetz (willing to continue)  
Mark Whitaker (willing to cont.)  
Stanley Ward (willing to cont.)  
Robin Morse (new nomination)

## Check Out Bailey!



Meet **Bailey Bierhuizen**, one of our Junior Members at last year's Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival.

Her booth display won **First Place for Minor Breeds**. She was there with her *entire flock* of Black Welsh that she got from Tom Wyman. Bailey is 13 (going on 14) years old and lives in Culpeper, VA. She also attended the first ABWMSA General Meeting last fall at Wye Heights Plantation with her grandmother, Sue Platts.

Way to go, Bailey! And GOOD LUCK for this year too!

## **And We Do this Sheep Thing Again Because??.....Two Tales of Fun & Games**

### **Tale One: By Oogie McGuire**

(as posted to the Black Welsh Yahoo list)

Shearing is certainly a trial this year!

We were scheduled for 3/24/05. There was snow, of course, so Ken and I spent all day making pens under the hay barn and moved all the sheep there to stay dry. The shearer got delayed at his previous places due to weather so we were rescheduled for Monday 3/28.

That was okay, we still had dry sheep. The shearer still had a dozen sheep at his last stop to finish in the morning, but then up to us. Amazing how those dozen morphed into more full grown sheep overnight! <G>.

We finally started at 11:30a and stopped at 6:30p with only 73 done. Black sheep are hard to shear even with lights in the barn.

He was scheduled to come back Tuesday and finish. By that morning we had sun and a few clouds. The sheep remained dry. Called the shearer and he said he'd drive up from his sister's house in Grand Junction.

He called us about halfway here: road was closed due to another snowstorm and a 40 car accident. The snow arrived here about 30 minutes later. It snowed, it rained, it hailed, it thundered, it blew from a different direction and snow came all the way into the barn. Nothing we could do, as the sheep were as protected as we could manage. The road opened up about noon, and I called the shearer back.

More snow in the middle of shearing and the remaining sheep, who had started to dry got soaked again. You can't

shear wet sheep. Hopefully things will dry out a bit and we can finish on Monday 4/4. As I type this we have about an inch on the ground and snowing heavily again.

### **Tale Two: By Suzanne Correia**

I've discovered a new fitness routine.

I have horses in addition to my sheep and ride Dressage. My riding area which includes the 20m x 40m arena plus another 30m area adjoins my sheep pasture.

A single BW ram lamb managed to get through a 3" vertical gap between the gate and the post.

I crept up on him - he ran the long side (40m) and then some, executed a near perfect turn on the hindquarters (TOH) and ran back. I attempted a half pass to draw him from the long side to where I could catch him. He did another TOH and raced back in half pass (well-cadenced).

I tried to corner him and he executed a perfectly square halt and remained immobile UNTIL I got within inches of him. He raced away across the 20m short side, made a perfect corner (did not cut it or flatten it in the least), and off down the other long side. I raced him to the gate and opened it, then headed him toward it.

He cantered (very round and collected) to the gate, stopped in front of it, did another TOH, and ACROSS THE DIAGONAL in an extended (sheep) trot, finally leaping out OVER the other gate.

I chased him onto pasture from the wide open spaces of the rest of our property after another 15 minutes of jogging.

I lost 3 lbs and he shows great promise for possibly even Third Level if he'll grow to 16hh.